A

FAREWELL ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT

YATTENDON, BERKS,

On the Fifth of JULY, 1772,

By GEORGE BELLAS, D. D. RECTOR.

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M.DCC.LXXIV.

To the READER.

THE following Addreſs was not intended to be made public: but as a traveſtile Copy of it has been ſecretly handed about, I beg Leave to preſent it to the Friends of Truth in its original Simplicity.

GEO. BELLAS.

II. COR. xiii. 11.

Finally Brethren, farewell.

BEFORE I take my Leave of you, my dear Brethren, I muſt put you and myſelf in Mind of what Articles will ariſe to our Charge, from the Relation which has now for near twenty Years ſubſiſted between us. I have been your Paſtor, You have been a Congregation committed to my Care. We are now, my dearly beloved in Chriſt Jeſus, parting from each other, perhaps to meet no more as Miniſter and People, till the Day when our Lord ſhall come to reckon with us. On that Day an Account will be demanded from Me of the Doctrine I have taught; and from You of your Attention, and Improvements under my Miniſtry. If, according to my Abilities, I have

I have endeavoured your Edification in the Goſpel; if I have laboured to eſtabliſh you in the true Faith of Chriſt; if I have warn'd you of the Danger of Sin, explain'd to you your Duty, and ſet before you the Obligations that require, and the Motives that ſhould perſuade you to walk in it, I may then look back with Joy upon the Years in which I have ſerved you in the Lord: And if the Power of the Goſpel has been manifeſted through my Weakneſs, and the Word ſown hath brought forth its proper Fruit, the Glory will belong to God, the Reward to your Souls, to me alſo Joy greater than the Triumphs of thoſe who divide the Spoils.

For my own Part, I dare not ſay I have done my Duty as I ought: And I heartily pray, and deſire you all to pray to God to forgive me all my Defects. But this Satisfaction I have, that (though with much Weakneſs, yet with an honeſt and ſincere Mind) I have endeavoured to teach you the Way that leadeth to Salvation.

A more

A more learned, a more eloquent Miniſter might have been found for you; but one that had a more tender Concern for your everlaſting Welfare could not be found. Often, very often have I applied to myſelf, in my private Meditations, the remarkable Declaration of God to the Prophet Ezekiel, "Son of Man, "I have made thee a Watchman to the Houſe of "Iſrael; therefore hear the Word at my Mouth, and "give them Warning from me. When I ſay unto the "Wicked thou ſhalt ſurely die, and thou giveſt him "not Warning, nor ſpeakeſt to warn the Wicked from "his wicked Way to ſave his Life; the ſame wicked "Man ſhall die in his Iniquity, but his Blood will I "require at thine Hand. Again, when the righteous "Man doth turn from his Righteouſneſs, and com-"mit Iniquity, he ſhall die becauſe thou haſt not "given him Warning, he ſhall die in his Sin, but "his Blood will I require at thine Hand."

May this, my dear Brethren, be neither your Caſe nor mine! may neither you ſuffer for want of taking, nor I for want of having given you neceſſary Warning.

That

That we may not, I do now beg for my Sake, for your own Sakes, and for the Sake of Jeſus Chriſt, in whoſe Name, and by whoſe Authority I have ſpoken unto you, that you will take this my laſt Warning which I am to give you in the Capacity of your Miniſter.

The Word which I have heard at the Mouth of God, you have often heard at mine; and I do once more now declare it unto you, viz. that if Sinners do not turn from their evil Ways they ſhall ſurely die in their Iniquities; but if even now they return from their Sins, and do that henceforwards which is lawful and right, they ſhall ſurely live, they ſhall not die.—And I here call this Congregation to witneſs,—nay, I call God to witneſs! that I have buried every Reſentment againſt you, knowing that we are Brethren of the ſame Father, who records the Sincerity of my Heart.

I am now parting from you,—let this final Declaration of one who cordially loves you, of one who is

now

now as it were your dying Friend, ſink deep into your Hearts, and have the deſired Influence upon your Lives:—with Pleaſure ſhall I part with mine, if, when I come to meet Death, I can have the Satisfaction of believing I have been an Inſtrument under God of your everlaſting Salvation.

God in his infinite Mercy pardon my Defects in preaching his Word, and yours in hearing it! God grant that when I come to render an Account of my Miniſtry amongſt you to Chriſt my Judge, I may be able to do it in the ſame Words in which He reſigned his mediatorial Office,—I have given unto them the Words thou gaveſt unto me, and they have kept them.—All mine are thine, thoſe that thou gaveſt me I have kept, and none of them is loſt.

* In the mean Time, I ſhall ever bleſs God for that Providence of his which placed me amongſt you;—your Happineſs ſhall be the conſtant Object of my

* Job ii. 9.

Prayers;

Prayers; and I hope I ſhall always have the Aid of your Prayers for me.

May the Lord of all Things guide and proſper you! may his Providence beſtow upon you and your Children (many of whom this Hand hath admitted into the Chriſtian Fellowſhip) all Bleſſings needful and convenient for you!—eſpecially deliver you from every evil Work! and preſerve you blameleſs to his Kingdom of Glory!

Finally Brethren, farewell!—

I commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among them which are ſanctified! *Amen! Amen!*